

Springfield, PA -- On Monday, March 12, Congressman Joe Sestak, the Vice Chair of the US House's Small Business Committee, addressed the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce at its Annual Federal Forum. At the event, Joe spoke about his work on the Small Business Committee, economic development in the district, and issues facing the Congress in 2007, including education and health-care reform.

"As the Vice Chair of the Small Business Committee, I believe small businesses are the backbone of our economy," noted Joe. "But, In recent years, middle class Americans have been increasingly squeezed by the rising cost of living—from the rising and fluctuating cost of gasoline and energy, to significant increases in the cost of health insurance premiums, to the cost of a college education far exceeding the pace of inflation. These rising costs have not only affected individuals and their families, but also have significant impacts to small business owners.

That is one reason I chose to serve on the Small Business Committee, because it will allow me to help shape the policies that drive small business development and entrepreneurship, which I hope will ultimately help to attract new, job-creating businesses, and to draw entrepreneurs to establish high-value added businesses in Delaware County to reverse the decline of manufacturing businesses and jobs lost in the past few decades."

"I am especially interested in working towards creating economic development opportunities of the 7th District's inner-suburbs, to help revitalize urban commercial corridors like Upper Darby and Lansdowne. I hope to achieve this through building a strong linkage between academia, private business, and government to spur innovation and to provide greater access to capital to help entrepreneurs start up and expand their businesses."

During Joe's first week in Congress, his first item of business was to restore fiscal discipline, which had been lost with our current Administration, through implementing a "pay-as-you-go" government. Only through controlling spending would it be possible to determine the true priorities and investments which the hard-earned American tax dollars should go towards.

During Joe's second week in Congress, he was fortunate to be selected to serve on the House Small Business Committee, of which I was later named Vice Chairman. The House Small Business Committee has oversight over the Small Business Administration (SBA), which

includes the popular 7(a) General Business Loan Program, the 504 Certified Development Company Program, the Microloan Program, and Small Business Development Centers.

The Committee conducts hearings on all the major programs of the SBA to determine their effectiveness, efficiency and determine possible options for improvements, as well as, will oversee the SBA's performance in carrying out its statutorily mandated roles.

Last month, Joe voted in favor of the H.R. 976, Small Business Tax Relief Act--a bipartisan bill with \$1.3 billion in tax cuts to help small businesses invest in new equipment and hire new workers. Additionally, Joe also cosponsored the Family Small Business Tax Relief Act which became a provision in H.R. 976, to allow husband and wife co-business owners to file a simpler joint return and ensure that both spouses will pay in and be able to receive social security benefits.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "DeepBlue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

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